

Testimony

By

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Vice-Provost for Academic Administration**

Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee Public Hearing

October 6, 2009

Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee, I am Nancy Bull, the Vice-Provost for Academic Administration at the University of Connecticut. Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to testify today and highlight the University's efforts to align our academic programs with the workforce and economic development needs of Connecticut.

As Connecticut's only public research, land grant and sea grant university, UConn continues to play an active and unique role in strengthening our state's economy. For state residents, students, as well as employers and communities alike, UConn serves as a beacon of excellence in teaching and learning, a repository and generator of talent, and a creator of new knowledge. Collectively, these benefits uniquely position the University as one of the state's most viable engines of long-term economic growth. More than ever before, UConn is a smart investment for educating Connecticut's workforce, driving innovation and stimulating economic development in the state of Connecticut. Ultimately the University's impact reaches into each town in the state.

Due to Connecticut's tremendous investment in terms of UCONN 2000, the University is reversing Connecticut's brain drain by attracting record numbers of diverse, high-achieving students who live and work in communities across the state after graduation. We contribute significantly to Connecticut's talented workforce; graduating doctors, dentists, nurses, engineers, teachers, lawyers, pharmacists, business and financial analysts, communication and media specialists, and scientists, who contribute daily to our economy.

The University's growing reputation helps keep Connecticut's best students in our state and draws excellent students from elsewhere—students who frequently remain in Connecticut upon graduation and join the state's economy. Undergraduate enrollment at UConn has increased from 14,667 in 1995 to 21,496 today – an increase of 47%. Not only has the size of our student body increased, so has the quality. From fall 1996 to fall 2009, average SAT scores for Storrs freshmen increased from 1113 to 1212, an increase of 100 points. At the same time, minority enrollment at Storrs and the 5 regional campuses increased from 2006 to 2009 by 137%. When the Health Center is included the increase was 84%. A total of 1,074 valedictorians and salutatorians enrolled as freshmen at all campuses from 1995 to 2008.

As you all know, understandable reductions in state support are presenting the University with numerous challenges. Last year, we struggled to absorb \$12 million in reductions to our FY 09 state appropriation. For FY 10, we are level funded -- at the FY 09 level minus rescissions -- and have already received a \$2.3 million allotment reduction to our Storrs budget and a \$1.2 million reduction to Health Center budget. Despite these reductions, we remain committed to maintaining academic quality and preserving access to our University as best we can. However, the impact of these reductions is real and felt each and every day.

Even in these difficult economic times, the University takes seriously its role in helping Connecticut address its workforce and economic development needs and has made tremendous progress in this area during the past decade. I would like to briefly highlight some of our successes and outline our continued efforts to train our state future workforce and create jobs.

Implementation of the University's Academic Plan

One of the core tenets of the University's recently completed Academic Plan is to assist Connecticut in meeting its workforce and economic development needs.

The Academic Plan highlights the importance of fostering strong undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in the sciences, engineering, business, and healthcare professions as well as other emerging areas like nanotechnology, environmental health, and sustainable energy. It stresses the need to facilitate workforce re-training through our traditional programs and our Center for Continuing Studies as the state economy continues to transition to a knowledge economy. The recruitment of top-tier faculty will be critical to achieving this goal.

To encourage Connecticut's economic competitiveness and fulfill the mission of Connecticut's only public research, land grant and sea grant university, the Plan also focuses on the translation of discoveries in the basic sciences to products, policies, and practices. The University must expand its unique role in innovation, technology development and job creation by building key graduate and professional programs, particularly those with existing strengths and focused areas of excellence. To this end, President Hogan has formed a Committee for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Programs that will target our financial resources toward those programs that will provide the University and state with the best return on investment.

Each of the six goals of the Academic Plan has both baseline and 2014 target goals. Schools and colleges have their own academic plans that build and feed into the University plan, available on the Provost's website:
(<http://academicplan.uconn.edu/files/UConnAcademicPlan.pdf>).

Additionally, the Plan calls for our Neag School of Education to continue to train teachers skilled in preparing K-12 students to pursue these areas of study and to disseminate best-practices to achieve school reform and enhance student achievement.

Increased Enrollment and Academic Programs in Key Workforce Areas

While more work still needs to be done, the University has made tremendous progress in meeting workforce shortages. The committee report on the *Alignment of Postsecondary Education and Employment* notes the strong need for registered nurses, accountants and auditors, educators, managers, and computer systems analysis. College graduates must be able to think holistically and critically, have diverse learning experiences, and the ability to work with others. As of 2008, 18% of our undergraduate students studied abroad. Our goal by 2014 is to increase that number to 30% who will have a more global educational experience. During the Fall 2008, 22% of undergraduate students enrolled in STEM disciplines were minority students. This was particularly true in biological sciences and chemistry.

As workforce and economic development needs emerge, the University does its best to respond with appropriate academic programming. For example, UConn now offers accelerated Nursing Master's programs at its Storrs, Stamford and Waterbury campuses. Our School of Business is now offering undergraduate and graduate concentrations in Entrepreneurship in an effort to train Connecticut's next generation of entrepreneurs. In response to the business community in Stamford, the University has started a Finance degree program at our campus there. The School of Engineering and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences now offer interdisciplinary curricula in nanotechnology – a discipline that will be essential to the high-technology industries of the future.

Continuous Academic Program Review and Evaluation

In these times of diminishing financial support, the University is more committed than ever to ensuring our resources are used wisely to meet state employment needs.

Please know that we are constantly reviewing our academic programs to ensure that they address Connecticut's workforce shortages. We have closed low enrollment programs, and expanded programs needed to address workforce shortages. Graduate programs closed have included doctoral degrees in music education, biobehavioral sciences, botany, entomology, and zoology. In fact, one of the charges on the President's Committee for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Programs is to target investment in areas of strength and economic importance to our state and to phase out graduate programs that do not meet these criteria. Undergraduate programs that have merged for greater efficiencies include Kinesiology and Physical Therapy, Urban and Community Studies at Storrs and Tri-campus, and Sociology at Stamford has closed.

Increased Graduation and Retention Rates

To provide increased access to the University and educate highly-qualified individuals as quickly as possible, the University has made great strides in improving its graduation and retention rates. UConn has reduced the average time to graduation to 4.3 years among those who graduate within 6 years, and the University ranks 7th nationally among our 58 peer public research institutions. Our six-year minority graduation rate of 76% on the Storrs campus ranks 21st among the 58 peer institutions. Additionally, our freshmen retention rate of 92% and our minority freshman retention rate of 94% are impressive.

Recruitment of Top Tier Faculty

One of the key components in aligning our academic programs with Connecticut's workforce and economic development needs is the recruitment of top tier faculty. Our Academic Plan calls for the hiring of 145 new faculty members, but achieving this goal will be difficult given that we recently lost 63 faculty members to the Retirement Incentive Program and decreased resources. This adds to already vacant positions for a total number of about 130 faculty positions.

Nevertheless, hiring 145 additional faculty for the Storrs-based campuses, if funding was available, would allow UConn to position itself among the finest public institutions that have a student-faculty ratio of 15:1. Our student to faculty ratio (based on the U.S. News & World Report formula) has increased from 14.2:1 in 1995, to 17.0:1 in Fall 2008.

The University's plan to increase full-time faculty is designed to achieve four goals: Enhance the quality of the student experience, further the state's economic growth through research and workforce development, solidify the University's growing national reputation, and maximize the investment of parents and all taxpayers by ensuring that students can graduate in four years.

These additional faculty hires would be made in areas that respond to student demand, offer greatest research opportunity and tie to the state's economic development. The positions would be in the fields of the state's workforce needs, namely science, technology, and financial services.

All 145 new faculty would be active in both instruction and in research. Large class size limits the close interaction between students and faculty that has traditionally been a hallmark of a UConn education (and that differentiates us from some of our "mega-university" peers in other states); moreover, in fields where facilities and accreditation requirements place an absolute limit on number of enrollments (e.g., lab sciences) we need to insure that students are not closed out of required classes, delaying the time required to complete a degree.

The University of Connecticut's role as the State's public *research* university imposes a special responsibility. Our faculty not only convey knowledge in the classroom or lab; they also generate new knowledge, contributing to the quality of life and economic development of the state and the intellectual vitality of our own institution. Strategic choices in faculty hiring will also generate more grant income which will, in turn, enable the University to invest more in the research enterprise.

New facilities, private endowments and excellent new hires have led to a growth in Storrs-based research awards from \$53.4 million in FY '95 to \$93.1 million in FY '07. Though impressive, this amount of funded research falls short when compared to our peers. The level of research funding is important for three reasons. First, it stands as a proxy for the degree of advanced scholarly activity on campus. Second, and more concretely, research funding provides the non-state resources that also serve to enhance the academic programs.

Third, research funding catalyzes discoveries that contribute to economic growth and the well-being of people throughout the State of Connecticut.

Continued Interaction with Industry

There are a variety of formal and informal ways in which the University interacts with industry and receives input from the private sector regarding academic programs.

Almost every school and department at the University has an advisory committee with strong industry representation that provides us with specific information on the types of skills and training needed in the workplace. This information is critical to our schools and departments as they develop curricula create new academic programs and analyze existing programs.

Industry routinely seeks the expertise of many of our faculty, Departments and Centers. These interactions take a variety of forms and range from technology transfer, product development, undergraduate and graduate research projects, testing and application research, and business development activities. The University values these interactions as they give us key insight into the needs of Connecticut's industry.

The private sector also partners with the University to provide our students with numerous internship opportunities. Over 200 of our undergraduate courses alone have an internship component, giving our students hands-on industry experience.

Additionally, the University is grateful for the generous industry support our academic programs enjoy. The business and industry community provides gifts and donations which fund endowed chairs, technology, equipment, scholarships, and numerous academic programs. These gifts often reflect private sector priorities and also provide information that is useful to us in our academic planning process.

Training the Next Generation of Doctors and Dentists

The UCHC trains the next generation of doctors and dentists, today 60% of the dentists in the state are UConn dental school graduates and 35% of our medical school graduates practice in the state. It is widely known that there is an imminent shortage of doctors and dentists in the state of Connecticut. Investment and support for the academic medical center is critical to meeting the region and state's healthcare needs.

The UCHC is the state agency that provides our Connecticut students with the opportunity to study medicine and dental medicine in the state. For the enrolling class of 2009, Connecticut residents make up 80% of the Medical school class and 68% of the Dental School class.

Urban Pipeline Programs

Through a number of pipeline programs hundreds of students from across the state are exposed to health education and careers. A majority of the students participating are from underrepresented groups. The successful programs include:

- The Health Career Opportunity Programs (HCOP) actively recruits minority medical and dental students and supports those who are enrolled throughout the academic year. It provides enrichment programs for junior, high and college aid students and other programs to get children interested in health careers.
- Connecticut Area Health Education Center (AHEC) brings the resources of the Health Center to virtually all of Connecticut's 169 towns and cities. AHEC introduces high school students to the many opportunities for careers in health care, prepares college level health professions students to volunteer in settings that serve marginalized populations, facilitates residents and third-year medical students present research projects related to continuous quality improvement and conducts health promotion activities and other needed service and training. 51 percent of these students are from under-represented minority or disadvantaged backgrounds. There are four AHEC regional offices in Connecticut that together provide statewide coverage.
- Urban Service Track is a new initiative involving UConn's Schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Nursing and Pharmacy. This track recruits UConn students committed to meeting health care needs of the most underserved citizens of Connecticut and trains them to be providers who will make a difference and hopefully help to change the nature of our health care system so that it will meet the needs of all citizens.

The Medical School has made strides in its efforts to admit a diverse class with respect to race and ethnic background. The entering class of 2009 includes 21% of members of underrepresented minority groups.

Committee Recommendations

As the Committee moves to the recommendation phase of its work, the University asks that you take into consideration a number of important issues.

Funding for Alignment Initiatives

While much can be accomplished within existing resources, it may be difficult to take on major alignment initiatives, particularly the creation of new programs, without additional funding.

Maintaining Academic Program and Budget Autonomy is Essential

We hope that the Committee recognizes that the University, like all of Connecticut's public colleges and universities, exists in a very competitive environment where we vie for students, patients, faculty and sponsored research in a highly competitive environment. We manage six campuses, the Law School and the Health Center that are twenty-four hour per day, seven-day per week operations. The Health Center, for example, routinely serves medical emergencies, a rapidly growing outpatient population, and a diverse inpatient population, including pediatric patients, geriatric patients and all ages in between. All of our "customers" choose UConn and pay with dollars borrowed from long-term loans, personal savings, and retirement accounts, and other means for their education, clinical services or as a place to teach and conduct research. To continue to compete effectively, it is essential that we have the ability to serve our "customers" with the academic programming and budgetary autonomy that has made us so successful to date.

Conclusion

I compliment the diligent work of the Committee staff in putting this report together. We look forward to working with you in the coming months as you make recommendations and develop legislation.

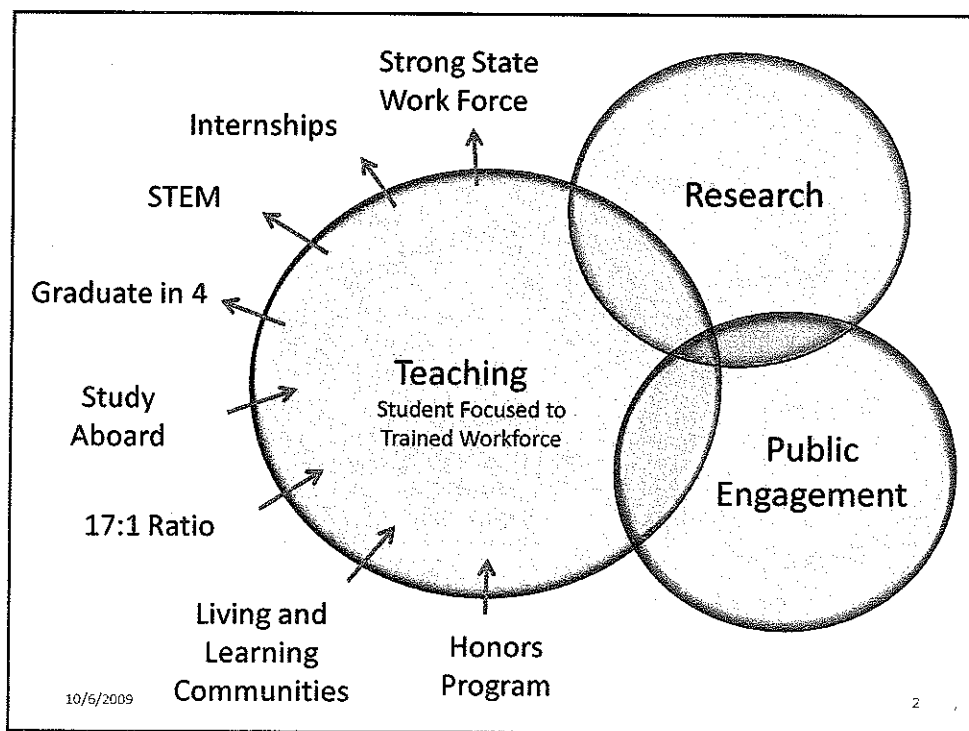
Thank you again for allowing me to testify and provide the Committee with information. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

UConn's Role as Connecticut's Only Public Research, Land Grant, Sea Grant Institution

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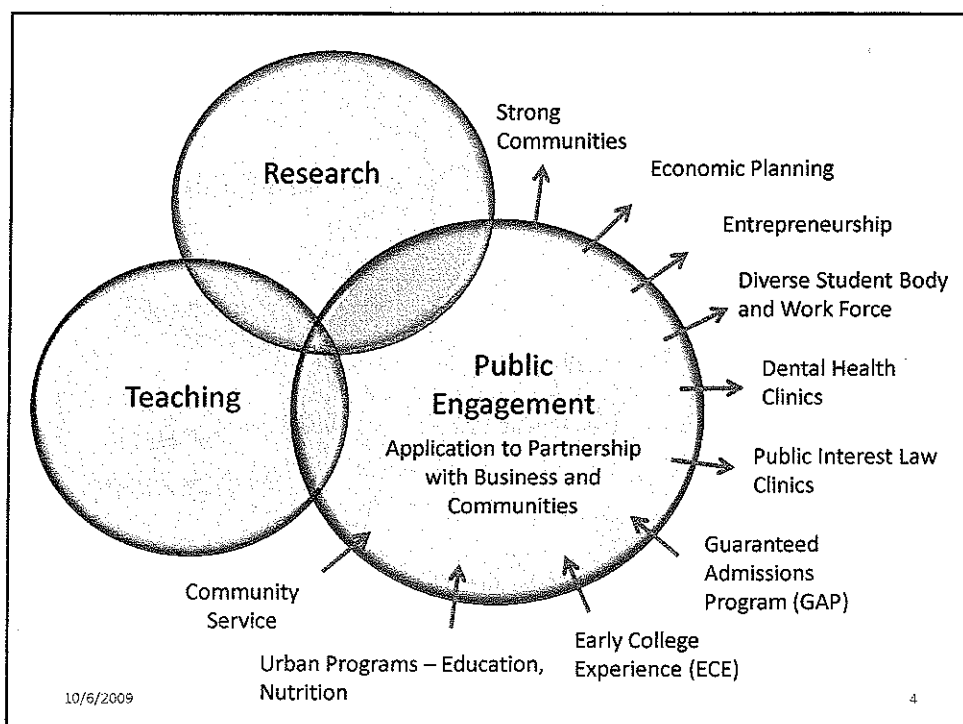
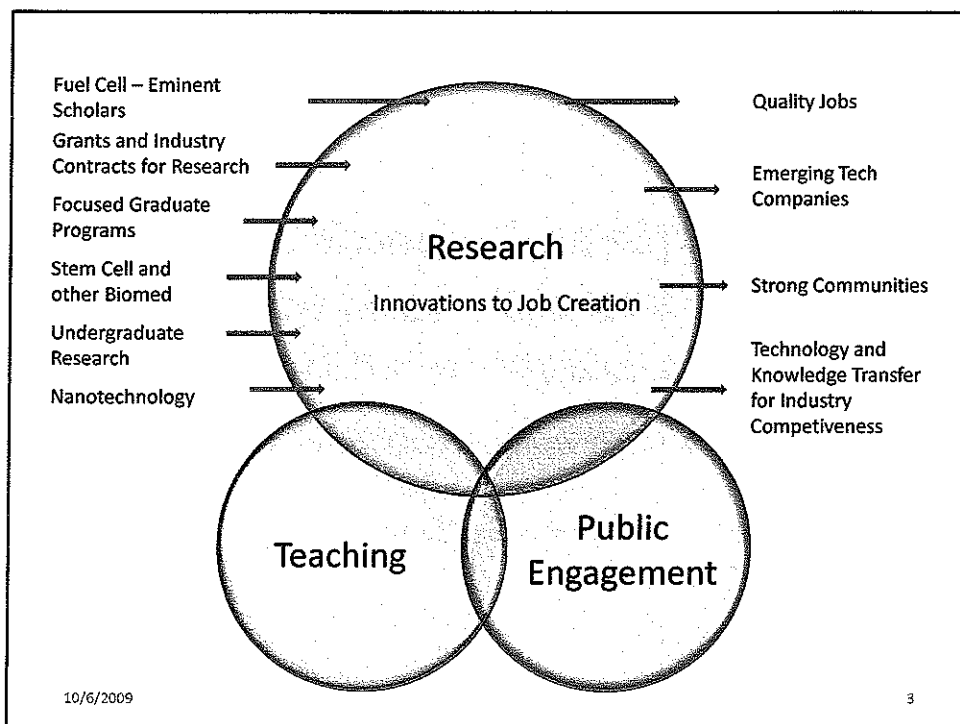
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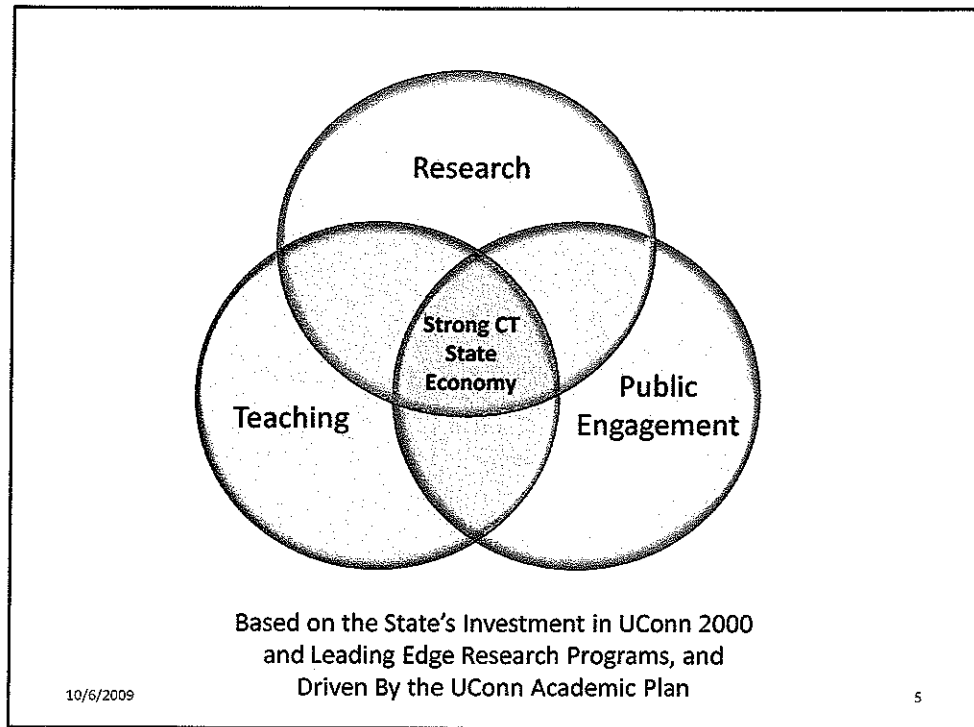
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THE ACADEMIC PLAN METRICS

University of Connecticut

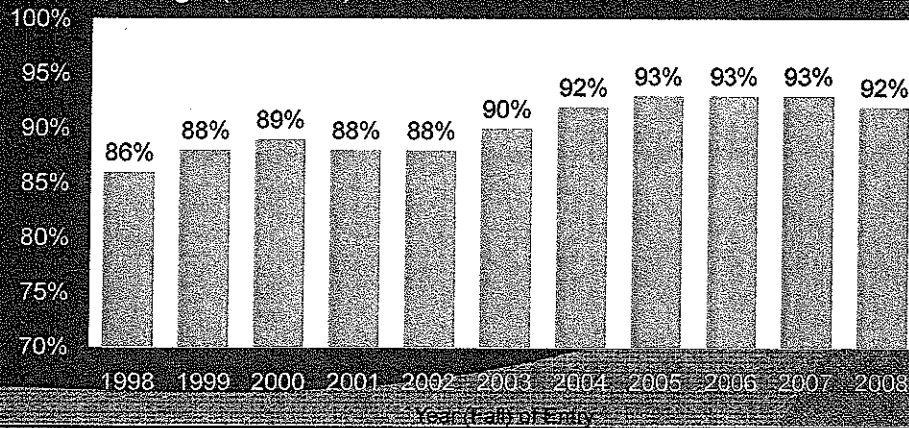
Goal 1 Undergraduate Education	Plan Baseline*	FY08	FY09	FY10	2014
		Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Goal
Freshmen Average SAT (Math & Verbal)	1192	1192	1200	1212	1220
Students in Top-10% of High School Class	40%	40%	39%	44%	45%
6-Year Graduation Rate	75%	75%	76%	NA (November calc)	78%
First-Year Retention Rate	93%	93%	93%	92%	95%
Annual Guaranteed Admissions Program Transfer Students	0	9	12	23	30
Study-Aboard Participation Rate	18%	18%	18%	NA (fiscal yr calc)	30%
Student/Faculty Ratio	17	17	17	18 (prelim estimate)	15
Undergraduate Credit Hours per Faculty	422	436	438	NA (acad yr calc)	470
Classes with Less than 20 Students	44%	44%	45%	NA (end of fall term calc)	47%
Students Entering the Honors Program Annually	290	291	339	402 (prelim estimate)	550
Students Participating in Internships Annually	2,000	NA (pending)	NA (pending)	NA (pending)	2,300
First-Year Students Participating in Living & Learning Communities	17%	19%	19%	26%	22%

* Note: Baseline varies in terms of fiscal year reported; latest available data as of August 2008.

Freshmen Retention Trend

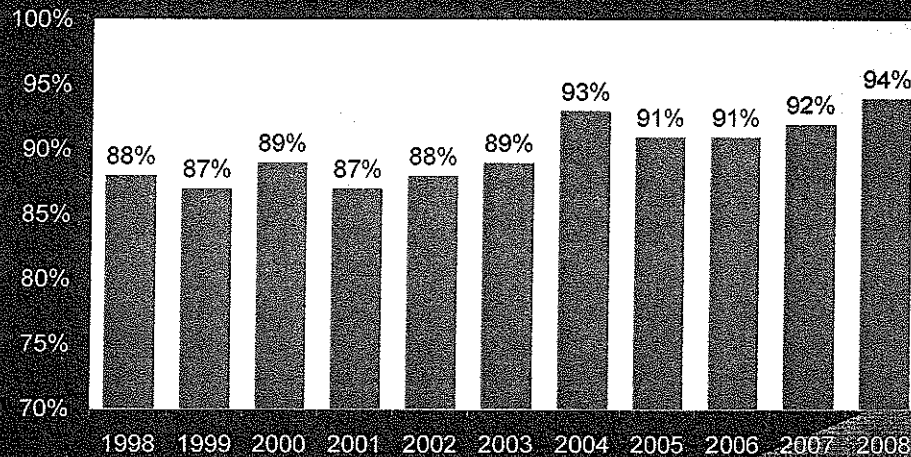
Storrs Campus

- Fall 2007 freshman retention rate is substantially higher than the 80% average for 424 colleges & universities in the national Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE)



Minority Freshmen Retention Trend

Storrs Campus



- Fall 2007 minority freshman retention rate is also substantially higher than the national 79% average (CSRDE)

University of Connecticut
Master's and Doctoral Enrollment in Selected Programs
Includes Full and Part Time Graduate Students
Fall 1999 - Fall 2009

School/College/Department	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	10 yr incr Fall 1999 to Fall 2009	5 yr incr Fall 2004 to Fall 2009	3 yr incr Fall 2006 to Fall 2009
Agriculture & Natural Resources														
Allied Health Profession	37	42	33	35	28	28	26	17	16	22	19	-48.6%	-32.1%	11.8%
Nutritional Sciences	33	35	41	45	53	44	46	41	43	38	34	3.0%	-22.7%	-17.1%
Engineering														
Biomedical Engineering	43	33	36	39	49	49	56	56	51	59	73	69.8%	49.0%	30.4%
Chemical, Materials, & Biomolecular Engineering	86	109	112	143	129	130	107	92	111	118	125	45.3%	-3.8%	35.9%
Civil & Environmental Engineering	67	59	69	67	82	78	67	59	62	63	83	23.9%	6.4%	40.7%
Computer Science & Engineering	62	63	65	75	85	94	87	79	92	90	95	53.2%	1.1%	20.3%
Electrical & Computer Engineering	66	79	83	94	96	94	84	94	108	114	120	81.8%	27.7%	27.7%
Engineering				3	8	5	2	4	10	17	13	-	160.0%	225.0%
Fluid Dynamics	0	1	1											
Mechanical Engineering	59	66	72	76	88	76	83	78	71	81	89	50.8%	17.1%	14.1%
Total Engineering	383	410	438	497	537	526	486	462	505	542	598	56.1%	13.7%	29.4%
Health Center														
Biomedical Science	125	133	151	162	163	173	188	181	173	156	155	24.0%	-10.4%	-14.4%
Clinical & Translational Research										7	10	-	-	-
Dental Science	32	29	31	35	29	34	34	37	36	38	41	28.1%	20.6%	10.8%
Public Health	201	193	175	189	152	149	140	131	128	127	123	-38.8%	-17.4%	-6.1%
Total Health Center	358	355	357	386	344	356	362	349	337	328	329	-8.1%	-7.6%	-5.7%
Liberal Arts & Sciences: Biological Sciences														
Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	52	56	60	55	59	56	58	57	57	52	56	7.7%	0.0%	-1.8%
Molecular & Cell Biology	101	102	120	131	141	149	139	144	145	152	174	72.3%	16.8%	20.8%
Physiology & Neurobiology	19	24	29	31	36	37	37	32	33	35	31	63.2%	-16.2%	-3.1%
Biological Sciences Total	172	182	209	217	236	242	234	233	235	239	261	51.7%	7.9%	12.0%
Liberal Arts & Sciences: Humanities														
English	97	97	103	111	124	108	105	104	99	97	89	-8.2%	-17.6%	-14.4%
History	86	81	82	72	72	75	72	72	65	65	64	-25.6%	-14.7%	-11.1%
Judaic Studies	5	4	5	7	5	4	5	5	5	6	7	40.0%	75.0%	40.0%
Medieval Studies	11	14	18	24	25	23	22	17	19	17	17	54.5%	-26.1%	0.0%
Modern & Classical Languages	71	85	85	99	89	89	82	86	85	89	76	7.0%	-14.6%	-11.6%

School/College/Department	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	10 yr incr Fall 1999 to Fall 2009	5 yr incr Fall 2004 to Fall 2009	3 yr incr Fall 2006 to Fall 2009
Philosophy	26	26	26	33	34	31	29	30	29	31	30	15.4%	-3.2%	0.0%
Humanities Total	296	307	319	346	349	330	315	314	302	305	283	-4.4%	-14.2%	-9.9%
Liberal Arts & Sciences: Physical Sciences														
Chemistry	85	93	90	102	109	107	111	132	139	136	134	57.6%	25.2%	1.5%
Geology & Geophysics	16	12	15	17	30	25	20	17	15	15	16	0.0%	-36.0%	-5.9%
Marine Science	21	24	23	23	28	36	44	47	48	45	38	81.0%	5.6%	-19.1%
Mathematics	80	72	85	104	109	102	100	115	109	116	120	50.0%	17.6%	4.3%
Physics	50	52	56	61	66	78	77	77	85	85	83	66.0%	6.4%	7.8%
Polymer Science	37	32	35	35	40	41	41	34	31	34	33	-10.8%	-19.5%	-2.9%
Statistics	35	38	43	45	49	42	44	39	42	47	55	57.1%	31.0%	41.0%
Physical Sciences Total	324	323	347	387	431	431	437	461	469	478	479	47.8%	11.1%	3.9%
Liberal Arts & Sciences: Psychology Total	151	144	149	153	153	148	157	148	155	151	146	-3.3%	-1.4%	-1.4%
Liberal Arts & Sciences: Social Sciences														
Anthropology	78	68	61	69	77	75	80	70	65	63	52	-33.3%	-30.7%	-25.7%
Communication Sciences	91	90	76	90	85	84	99	102	109	120	120	31.9%	42.9%	17.6%
Economics	80	83	78	71	64	75	67	66	68	73	76	-5.0%	1.3%	15.2%
Family Studies	67	65	74	72	68	74	65	52	56	53	48	-28.4%	-35.1%	-7.7%
Geography	22	18	21	25	24	23	23	24	22	24	25	13.6%	8.7%	4.2%
International Studies	18	15	11	12	18	22	22	25	25	23	19	5.6%	-13.6%	-24.0%
Linguistics	40	38	37	31	31	32	31	34	31	34	38	-5.0%	18.8%	11.8%
Political Science	132	135	129	85	83	80	85	78	81	81	68	-48.5%	-15.0%	-12.8%
Public Administration (MPA degree)				35	34	38	39	52	67	62	61	-	60.5%	17.3%
Sociology	44	40	45	39	37	37	39	46	47	50	44	0.0%	18.9%	-4.3%
Survey Research				8	12	10	13	15	12	10	6	-	-40.0%	-60.0%
Social Sciences Total	572	552	532	537	533	550	563	564	583	593	557	-2.6%	1.3%	-1.2%
Total Liberal Arts & Sciences	1,515	1,508	1,556	1,640	1,702	1,701	1,706	1,720	1,744	1,766	1,726	13.9%	1.5%	0.3%
Nursing	122	97	82	102	95	85	91	104	119	149	188	54.1%	121.2%	80.8%
Pharmacy	62	68	62	64	60	56	52	48	51	50	48	-22.6%	-14.3%	0.0%
Medical School														
Medicine (M.D.)	323	324	316	311	312	318	319	328	323	331	346	7.1%	8.8%	5.5%
Dental Medicine (D.M.D.)	172	160	155	158	161	167	166	169	164	172	170	-1.2%	1.8%	6.9%
Total Medical School	495	484	471	469	473	485	485	487	487	503	516	4.2%	6.4%	6.0%

Note: Excludes Graduate Certificates and Visiting Scholars.

Source: Fall Semester Census Enrollment Counts, Office of Institutional Research.

OIR/September 2009